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SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

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SUBJECT: NEW NEPAD CHIEF EXECUTIVE

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1. (U) Summary. In August 2005, Mozambican agricultural economist Firmino Mucavele was appointed the Chief Executive of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Secretariat. He replaced South Africa's Wiseman Nkuhlu, who continues to serve as South Africa's representative in the NEPAD Steering Committee. Mucavele specializes in African food security and was a member of the steering committee that formed NEPAD in 2001. His primary focus for the coming year is to speed up implementation of NEPAD's agenda, including lowering the costs of intra-African trade and ensuring that all member countries allocate 10% of their fiscal budget to agriculture for food security reasons. Mucavele hopes that all African partners can find common solutions at the African Partnership Forum in October, and looks forward to more countries completing the African Peer Review Mechanism process. End Summary.

NEPAD NAMES NEW CEO

2. (U) Professor Firmino G. Mucavele, a leading agricultural economist from Mozambique, was appointed Chief Executive of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Secretariat in August 2005. Mucavele took over from Wiseman Nkuhlu of South Africa, who will continue to serve as the South African member of the NEPAD Steering Committee. Nkuhlu resigned as South African President Mbeki's economic advisor and head of the NEPAD Secretariat at the end of July to pursue private business interests.

THE MAN

3. (U) Mucavele specializes in African food security. In 1995, he was a Southern African Development Community (SADC) consultant involved in the evaluation of the food, agriculture, and natural resources sector coordinating units. He was specifically involved in the evaluation of agriculture and trade programs, rural development financing, and training in food security and nutrition programs. Mucavele has served as a consultant for USAID, OXFAM Belgica, the World Bank, and PriceWaterhouseCoopers in missions of food security analysis, environmental economic analysis, agricultural markets liberalization in Mozambique, and rural development.

4. (U) In 2000, the United Nations invited Mucavele to integrate an expert team to map out a development program for the transfer of technologies to developing countries. This program served as the basis for a UN-organized conference on science and technology in least developed countries. In February 2001, Mucavele led the Steering Committee of African Economists in developing the Millennium Africa Recovery Program (MAP), a plan to spur economic growth and stability in the region. The MAP later evolved into the New African Initiative that was designated NEPAD in October 2001. He then went on to serve on the NEPAD Steering Committee.

5. (U) Mucavele earned a doctorate in food and resource economics from the University of Florida and has authored various publications in this field. He is a member of the International Association of Agricultural Economists. He serves as a Special Advisor to the President of Mozambique and is also a professor at the Eduardo Mondlane University in Maputo.

HIS VISION

6. (U) Mucavele presented his vision for NEPAD in a September 16th UN press conference. He wants to accelerate the implementation of NEPAD's agenda in the coming year. A key element of this agenda is lowering

the cost of intra-African trade. NEPAD is going to examine the norms and policies between its five subregions and hopes to synchronize customs procedures for trade entering by road, rail, and sea. Another item on the agenda is getting all members to devote 10% of their fiscal budget to agriculture as part of Africa's commitment to food security. He realizes that foreign aid will still be required for development, but would like to see Africa take food security into its own hands and play an active role in its own development.

17. (U) Mucavele had hoped for more for Africa out of the UN High Level Summit. Given current resource levels, he does not believe Africa will achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015. He estimates that Africa would need \$100 billion a year to meet the MDGs by 2015. At the African Partnership Forum (APF) in October, Mucavele wants to emphasize Africa's debt relief plans and preparation for the World Trade Organization meetings in December. He wants to find concrete solutions to achieve NEPAD's goals in agriculture, health, education, and water/sanitation access. Mucavele believes that "if Africa is not developed, then the world is not developed."

18. (SBU) Regarding the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), Mucavele admits that the process got off to a slow start; however, he can now point to Ghana and Rwanda as having completed their reviews. The evaluations of Nigeria, Mauritius, Kenya, and Uganda should be completed by December. He hoped that at least 14 more countries would join the APRM process, and has called for Zimbabwe to join. Mucavele has said that for Zimbabwe's problems to be solved and democracy achieved, people must have a voice and the right to participate in the political process. [Note: South Africa launched its nine-month APRM process on September 28 (septel). End Note.]

19. (U) Embassy/USAID Maputo cleared this message.

TEITELBAUM